

NATIONAL SECURITY MEDAL

The National Security Medal, established by President Truman on January 19, 1953, by Executive Order No. 10431, may be awarded, under the terms of that Order, to "any person, without regard to nationality, including members of the armed forces of the United States, for distinguished achievement or outstanding contribution on or after July 26, 1947, in the field of intelligence relating to the national security." According to further regulations issued by the President, also on January 19, 1953, such a contribution "may consist of either exceptionally meritorious service performed in a position of high responsibility or of an act of valor requiring personal courage of a high degree and complete disregard of personal safety."

This decoration "shall be awarded by the President of the United States or, under the regulations approved by him, by such person or persons as he may designate," so the Executive Order outlined. One of the awarding officials so designated is the Director of Central Intelligence.

The design of the National Security Medal, approved by the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council, is described as follows:

A blue enameled compass rose surrounded by a red enamelled oval, the interior dimensions of which are 1 inch vertically and 7/8 inch horizontally, bearing the inscription "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA" at the top and "NATIONAL SECURITY" at the bottom, the whole enclosed within a laurel wreath of gold-finished bronze surmounted by an American bald eagle standing with wings raised. On the reverse a serial number appears on the eagle and the words "PRESENTED TO" are impressed on the compass rose. The name of the recipient is engraved below. The medal is suspended by a loop from a silk moire ribbon 2 inches in length and 1 3/8 inches in width, composed of a band of dark blue (1/4-inch), gold (3/32-inch), dark blue (11/16-inch), gold (3/32-inch), dark blue (1/4-inch). Diagonal gold lines (3/32 inch in width and 3/32 inch apart) extend downward from the wearer's right to left across the center band of dark blue. The miniature of this medal is furnished at the time of the award.

Among those who have received the National Security Medal are the following:

General Walter Bedell Smith, former Director of Central Intelligence, January 1953

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, Director Federal Bureau of Investigation, May 1955

Mr. William F. Friedman, cryptanalyst, Armed Forces Security Agency, October 1955

Maj. Gen. William J. Donovan, former Director, Office of Strategic Services, April 1957.

Mr. Robert D. Murphy, former Under Secretary of State, December 1960